Chairman, Sir, Darjeeling is one of the most beautiful tourist spots in West Bengal though it is supposed not to be in the North-East. Sir, after the recovery of normalcy in Darjeeling tourists' traffic is on the increase and as per the statement of the hon. Minister, the number of tourist visitors in 1993 was 19,000. But, I think, the hon. Minister might have visited Darjeeling several times and might have experienced infrastructural hazards there. My question is: "What steps have the Government contemplated to remove these infrastructural hazards in Darjeeling?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, frankly speaking, I have not been able to understand the quetion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is asking about the infrastructural hazards. How will you remove those infrastructural hazards?

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, as I have already said, there is no question of improving the infrastructural hazards. We are, for the first time, seeking the interests of the international community. But, what promoted us to convence a meeting of the Chief Ministers and a meeting of the Ministers in the North-East was the outcome of the Berlin ITDC festival last March. When I went to attend the festival, we had, with us, about ten States from all over the country and we had also Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim with us. As far as the Arunachal Pradesh booking counter was concerned, they had, on the first day, booking for the whole of the year and the festival was for one week. So, the very next day, the representatives of the Arunachal Pradesh Government and the representatives of the Sikkim Government had to say to the customers in Berlin Festival that they could not take any bookings for one year because it was overbooked within one year. ...*(Interruptions)* .....We had only two States with us. It is true that the international tourists wanted to visit the whole of the North-Eastern States. Since we had two States, they could do the bookings. The booking could not be done in respect of other States since they were with us. So, the international community has shown interest in the whole of the North-Eastern States and that is why, after coming back from Berlin, we had gone there and had two meetings with the Ministers and the Chief Ministers and requested them not to proceed in a haphazard manner. There should be an integrated development. There should be some co-ordination between the Tourism Department, the Forest Department and the P.W.D. So, let each of them build up infrastructure and that is what we are doing.

Drugs licensed to Rhone Poulanc

*444. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:†

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of drugs which have been licensed to Rhone Poulanc to produce from basic stages and what are the drugs being produced as per licences condition;

(b) whether it is a fact that company is violating the conditions of the industrial licences by importing intermediates, if so, what action has been taken against them;

(c) whether it is a fact that the company is selling secnil-4 tablets at Rs. 48/-if so, on what basis; and

(d) what are the intermediates and bulk drugs they are importing from their principals or their sister concerns and what was the quantity and CIF value of the same during the last three years, year-wise?

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Rajni Ranjan Sahu.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) To the extent information is available M/S. Rhone-Poulanc (then M/s. May & Baker) had a licence for manufacture of bulk drug Metronidazole from the basic stage. After sanction of expansion of capacity, in 1976 a condition was imposed in the industrial licence that the company will not be allowed import of intermediates after the first year of operation and during this first year of operation the company should set up facilities for production of the bulk drug from the basic stage from the second year onwards. The company has reported that it has since discontinued production of bulk drugs. The company is reported to have complied in 1978 with the above condition imposed in the industrial licence for the manufacture of Metronidazole from the basic stage.

(c) Yes Sir. The formulation Secnil is not under price control.

(d) Company-wise imports are not monitored.

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am glad that, for the first time, the hon. Minister has admitted that the company, Rhone Poulanc, the then May & Baker, has discontinued production of bulk drug namely Metronidazole from the basic stage. One of the conditions of industrial licence was to produce bulk drug. The company has violated this condition. They are importing it at much higher prices. There is report of over-invoicing of imports of intermediates and bulk drug. सर, जाहिर है कि अधिक कीमत पर जब इंपोर्ट होगा तो उपभोक्ता को अधिक कीमत देनी पड़ेगी। I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any action has been taken by the Ministry, whether over-invoicing has been stopped by the company and whether any case has been registered against the company for over-invoicing as it is a very serious offence.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir,....

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I suggest our senior Minister, Mr. Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, should answer, for he and Mr. Sahu are great friends.

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Yes, we are great friends. Why do you feel jealous of it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyway, let the Minister of State answer objectively.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, production of this particular bulk drug was started by this company somewhere in 1969 and then they stopped it in 1992. We have no report to show that they have violated any conditions. It is left to them; if they have stopped, they have stopped. We have no report to the effect that they had violated any conditions while they were producing. That is number one.

The hon. Member talked about over-invoicing. It is very general. He is making a general allegation. Such type of allegations or such type of concerns were expressed earlier also, not regarding this company but generally, about over-invoicing by companies from the parent companies. Therefore, we referred these matters to the Department of Revenue Intelligence. They come out with an answer that after investigation they found no case. That is number two.

I may also mention here that on the question of over-invoicing, it is a bit tricky. It is a bit difficult for the companies. We don't go just by the price that a company shows. We go by the price which a company shows or by the weighted average price of other companies which have imported, whichever is lower. So, it gets a bit difficult to make profit out of over-invoicing or through over-invoicing. Whatever I say is just a general type of

submission, which I am making. If there is any specific information, if the hon. Member brings it to me, I will have it fully investigated and I will inform him of the results to his satisfaction.

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has said that he has known about it recently. But in his reply he has stated that the company has reported that it has discontinued production of bulk drug from 1992. I would like to correct him. It is not from 1992. It is from 1978. It was in 1978 that the report had been received by the Department that they had stopped production of bulk drug.

My second supplementary is that I do agree that the formulation, Secnil, is under price de-control. But the price of Metronidazole, which is a derivative of Secnil, as per the Government notification, is Rs. 6/ for ten tablets. But in the garb of price de-control, Secnil, a drug prepared by using the same ingredients but with a different name, is being charged Rs. 48 per ten tablets. So, the consumer is being looted by the company. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what steps are being taken to bring down the price of Secnil which is used by the poor for diahorrea and dysentery.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, as far as my knowledge goes, I have tried to look into it in depth. The price of Rs. 48 is not exorbitant or out of the way. We have obtained the details of the cost of the ingredients or the components of these particular tablets. We have found that to the cost a mark-up of around 20 per cent or 28 per cent or 30 per cent has been added. In price control, the mark-up, ex-factory price is added upto 100 per cent. Therefore, from the information available with me — I have the information in detail — it does not appear to be exorbitant. I must, however, say here that whenever the question of price comes, we are not here to defend higher prices. We will not. I mean it. If there is a case for reducing the prices, we are all for it. That is the approach that we have.

श्री रजनी रंजन साहू: बाजार में जाकर खरीदलें 48 रुपए में मिल रहा है सेक्रिल टेब्लेट, 6 रुपए की जगह पर और यह कह रहे हैं कि उनके पास जानकारी नहीं है। मैं निवेदन करूंगा मंत्री महोदय से कि बाजार में जाकर टेब्लेट को खरीदकर देखें कि वह 48 रुपए में मिलती है या 6 रुपए की जो उनकी नोटिफाइड प्राईस है, उस पर मिलती है?

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: बड़े मंत्री जी से भी कहें।

श्री अजीत जोगी: अध्यक्ष महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी ने अपने उत्तर में बताया है कि दवा कम्पनियों को जो लाइसेंस दिए जाते हैं उसमें कतिपय शर्तें लगाई जाती हैं और जब शर्तों का उल्लंघन होता है तो उन पर कार्रवाई की जाती है। मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि दवा बनाने वाली कम्पनियों को जो लाइसेंस दिया जाता है और उसकी शर्तों का जब उल्लंघन होता है, तो वह क्या केवल लाइसेंस रद्द करते हैं या उस उल्लंघन की गंभीरता को देखते हुए उन दवा कम्पनियों पर और कोई कार्रवाई करते हैं? जो कार्रवाई की जाती है उसका क्या मापदण्ड होता है और किस आधार पर वह दवा बनाने वाली कम्पनियों पर कार्रवाई करते हैं।

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, a person who breaches any condition of the licence can be punished under the Industries (Development Regulation) Act, 1951 and he can also be punished under the general Criminal Law whenever it is justified.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 445.

Shortfall in cement production

*445. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Cement Industry has reported a shortfall in output during the quarter, April-June, this year;

(b) if so, whether the industry would be able to achieve the annual production target for the current year;